

**Fresno Bee, The (CA)**

May 2, 2003

## **Corcoran prison dairy lauded**

**Dairy recognized with association's top award for milk quality for the third straight year.**

Kings County has its share of both dairies and prisons, and one of its prisons has received awards from the county's Dairy Herd Improvement Association for the quality and production of milk produced at its dairy.

The state's **Prison Industry Authority** announced that Corcoran State Prison's dairy earned the DHIA's top award for milk quality for the third straight year.

The dairy at the prison, capable of milking up to 1,800 cows a day and producing 400,000 gallons of milk a month, was recognized for having the lowest somatic cell count in the county last year. Somatic cell count is considered an industry standard for measuring milk quality, as elevated cell counts can reduce the shelf life and flavor of milk.

Somatic cell counts in samples from the Corcoran State Prison dairy were measured at 100,000 cells per milliliter.

"Receiving the lowest somatic cell count award for the third consecutive year is a testament to the dedication of the staff and inmates who have developed an excellent herd management program at the ... dairy at Corcoran," said Eddie Ylst, acting general manager of the **Prison Industry Authority**.

The dairies operated by the state agency "maintain a very high standard for quality products and service," Ylst added. "I am proud of the staff and inmates at the Corcoran dairy and their dedication is evident in attaining these awards."

In addition to the quality award, the Kings County DHIA also recognized the prison dairy at Corcoran as the sixth-highest milk-producing dairy herd in the county, home to more than 100 dairies.

Corcoran's dairy sells its milk to the state Department of Corrections and Youth Authority facilities, state hospitals, and the State Veteran's Home.

The **Prison Industry Authority** operates three dairies that employ about 300 inmates at prisons in Corcoran, Soledad and Tracy.

The agency's mission is to provide job assignments for California prison inmates, with the resulting products and services available to federal, state and local government agencies.

The authority operates more than 65 factories that produce such things as flags, coffee, shoes, printing services, signs, binders, eyewear, gloves, office furniture, license plates, clothing, cell equipment, and much more.

The jobs, prison officials say, help reduce idleness, decrease violence, and improve work habits and job skills among inmates. In addition, court-ordered fines and restitution are deducted from the wages earned by inmates.

In addition to the dairy, inmate job enterprises at Corcoran State Prison include manufacturing modular office furnishings, laundry, warehouse and freight distribution, industrial maintenance and agriculture.